six-feet-six. "Dear me, dear me!" voiced a thin soprano from the corner of the room.

I was so angry I could have slapped someone but, keeping control of my voice, I managed to say, "Ladies and gentlemen, excuse me for intruding. I did not know that a meeting of lunatics was being held here." I turned to the door, but Mikhail barred my way, screaming, "Who is a lunatic? What about the armed demonstrations you ordered for three o'clock?"

"What demonstration? Who ordered it?" resounded from different sides.

"Sergei Petrov ordered it," shouted Mikhail. "At the University."

My self-assurance collapsed. Those whom I had called "lunatics" looked at me with horror. In my confusion I did not notice the arrival of the youngest member of our group, Eugene Litkens. Although only a year younger than I, he looked like a mere boy and was very good at brief emotional harangues of crowds. He liked to go to meetings with me, and we often appeared as a team.

Now Eugene came to my rescue. "Nobody ordered an armed demonstration," he shouted. "But last night, while disbanding the University meetings, all the speakers invited workers to come back today with arms. We had to give the people something to make them leave the University in an orderly way, and this seemed the best thing we could think of."

"We are murderers," cried Mikhail.

"We are murderers," seconded the thin soprano.

Then I said, "I see that there will be no meeting of this group today. I am going back to the University. If things go wrong, nobody will reproach us for having brought the people into the streets while we ourselves remain in safety. Who will come with me?"

Eugene and Nikolai joined me. We hurried through side streets and were lucky in getting a droshky that took us to the quay not far from the University. The situation there was the same as in the center of the city—crowds of workers moving in both directions, detachments of soldiers beating time, files of riding Cossacks.

Almost at once, workers recognized me. "Why so late? People get tired of waiting! Time to begin!"

"We shall begin nothing today!" I declared firmly.

"But we were told last night . . ."

"The order has been repealed by the party. We are not ready."

"Why not? We did not come with empty hands," shouted a youth.

"Show me what you have."

The boys exhibited a couple of knives with fixed blades, short crowbars, an old pocket pistol. We inspected their arsenal and I declared, "Not enough! The order stands. We start nothing today!"